

**DELAWARE COMMISSION OF VETERANS AFFAIRS  
MEETING MINUTES  
MAY 15, 2012**

Members Present: Thompson, Lardizzone, Carroll, Corsa, Evans, Goss, Harden, Lank, Newstadt, Newman, Sarg and Weir

Members Excused: Keithley and Wasson

Staff Present: Davila, Mitchell and Dunham

Introduction of Guest(s): Bill McMullen (AF Sergeants Association), Linda Boone and David Stroud (Home of the Brave), Bettylou Evans (American Legion), Mark Wischman (DAV), Bill McMichael (The News Journal), Michelle Lee (Operation Military Kids), Jean Goss and Kathleen Crawley

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance to our Nation's Flag.

Chairman opened the meeting by providing an update on the \$300 bonus for Persian Gulf Veterans. Mr. McMullen reported that his organization recently conducted elections and he is now the Vice President for the division that runs from Maine to Delaware and over to Michigan.

Mr. Stroud provided a progress report for the Home of the Brave. He explained the admittance process and answered questions. Ms. Boone spoke about how the grant program works and changes being proposed.

Mr. Wischman donated a framed crocheted flag he won at the DAV Convention.

**MOTION BY CORSA TO ACCEPT APRIL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES, SECONDED BY HARDEN, MOTION CARRIED.**

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **PERSONNEL**

Vice Chairman Lardizzone introduced our new Service Officer: Mr. Charles Murrell. Mr. Murrell provided a brief personal summary. Mr. Davila introduced Ms. Elizabeth Dippel, our new Administrative Specialist casual/ seasonal and stated she would be the assistant to the service officers.

### **NORTHERN CEMETERY**

Commissioner Harden reported the second bid hearing was held for the marker realignment project. She spoke about the volunteer work done by a Boy Scout troop, trees that were donated by the Rotary Club and upcoming projects. Mr. Davila elaborated on the projects and the bid hearing and discussion followed.

### **SOUTHERN CEMETERY**

Commissioner Evans reported that the Flag Day Ceremony will be held on June 14, 2012, at 10:00 am. The next Family Advisory Cemetery Committee meeting will be held in July 2012.

## **HEALTH SERVICES**

Commissioner Corsa reported that he has become involved with the Veterans Home and Home of the Brave committees and things are going well with both. He does have concerns about the CBOC in Sussex County's inability to provide services and this prompted discussion.

## **LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS**

Vice Chairman Lardizzone reported that the Chairman, Executive Director and himself went to talk to the legislators about newly proposed legislation and they were all for it. They also spoke to them about the WWII Memorial in Dover and Representative Jaques said they would discuss it during the next session.

## **PUBLIC RELATIONS**

Commissioner Weir reported that spouses are permitted to use the VA transportation system in certain circumstances. Since he has been involved with the Home of the Brave, he has been going to different organizations speaking about women veteran's needs in hopes of raising money for the women's shelter. Ms. Boone spoke about the challenges facing fundraising and running of a women's shelter and discussion followed.

## **COMMEMORATIVE AFFAIRS**

Commissioner Lank announced that the Memorial Day Services will be held on May 30, 2012, at 10:30 am at the Bridge and 2:00 pm at the Northern Cemetery.

Ms. Dunham provided an update for the Delaware Veterans Home.

## **ORGANIZATIONAL REPORTS**

Carroll (MOPH) – Their organization was contacted by Tower Hill School to speak to the students. Their Department Convention will be held on June 9, 2012, at Dover Downs.

Corsa (VVA) – There will be a Memorial Day Ceremony on Monday, May 28, 2012, at the VVA Memorial in Kent County.

Evans (American Legion) – Their State Convention will be held the weekend after July 4, 2012.

Goss (KWVA) – They are having a Flag Pole Dedication at the Home of the Brave on June 2, 2012, with lunch to follow.

Harden (WAVES) – Eight members of their organization took a tour of the Delaware Veterans Home and it was a wonderful visit. Their next WAVES meeting will be held on June 23, 2012.

Lank (MOWW) – He mentioned that he participates in community awards presentations and because MOWW is not represented at the Northern Cemetery, they are trying to establish a flag pole and flag.

Lardizzone (DAV) – The DAV Blue Rocks Game will be on May 22, 2012, and they obtained a box for the folks from the Veterans Home. They are having a forget-me-not drive at the Camden Wal-Mart on June 1 & 2, 2012. The Department of New York DAV is celebrating their 91st Birthday this weekend and he will be attending. Their State Convention will be held on June 22 & 23, 2012, at the Dover Sheraton.

Newman (VFW) – On June 2, 2012, the Honor Degree of the VFW, Military Order of the Cooties, will be going to the Home of the Brave and presenting a donation check for the women's shelter. Their State Convention will be held at the Sheraton in Dover on June 9-10, 2012.

Newstadt (JWV) – Their annual Installation luncheon will be held on June 10, 2012. The Newark Parade is scheduled for May 20, 2012, and Separation Day in New Castle will be held on June 9, 2012. Delaware Military Heritage Day will be held on October 20, 2012; see him if you are interested in attending.

Sarg (MOAA) – He has been busy lobbying for veterans' benefits in Washington, DC, and helped with presentations to the ROTC at the University of Delaware. They will have their annual scholarship banquet this Saturday, May 19, 2012, and spoke about some of the projects he has been working on.

Thompson (MCL) – They will participate in a Memorial Day Ceremony on May 28, 2012, at Sharon Hills Cemetery. This inspired discussion about lack of participation in Memorial Day ceremonies.

**MOTION BY CORSA TO HAVE THE COMMISSION CONTACT SCHOOLS TO SEE IF THERE IS INTEREST IN HAVING COMMISSIONERS SPEAK ABOUT VETERANS, SECONDED BY THOMPSON, MOTION CARRIED.**

Chairman Thompson suggested the Commission come up with an outline for these speaking engagements and discussion followed.

Commissioner Harden announced the 5th Anniversary Celebration for the Delaware Veterans Home will be held on June 13, 2012, and the bull roast will be held on June 20, 2012.

#### **ITEMS FOR THE GOOD AND WELFARE OF THE ORGANIZATION**

Mr. McMullen reported that the Air Force Sergeants Association presented their JROTC awards. They have involved the DAFB with the presentations and it has made some positive changes. They recently had a successful Division Convention at the Sheraton. Their National Convention is scheduled for August 11-16, 2012, in Jacksonville, FL. He also spoke about getting certifications for returning veterans in the field they worked in.

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING: JUNE 19, 2012 (10:00 AM)**

**LOCATION: Robbins Bldg, 802 Silver Lake Blvd, Suite 100  
Dover, DE**

**ADJOURNED**